

**WONDER LAKE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 26, 2025, 9:30 A.M.**

The Board of Trustees of the Wonder Lake Fire Protection District held their regular monthly meeting on August 26, 2025, at Station 1, at 9:30 Wonder Lake, IL

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MEMBERS PRESENT: President/Trustee Todd Rishling, Treasurer/Trustee Dave Bruchsaler, Secretary/Trustee Erv Gall, Trustees Jackie Basista and Rick Berndt, Deputy Chief Matt Yegge, Attorney Megan Lamb and 4 members from the department or public was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: D. Bruchsaler motioned to approve the agenda as written. J. Basista seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

PUBLIC HEARING: E. Gall motioned to open the public hearing at 9:32 a.m. D. Bruchsaler seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved. The draft budget of the Wonder Lake Fire Protection District has been available for the public for 30 days and notice of the draft budget has been published. No public comments therefore E. Gall motioned to close the public hearing at 9:33 a.m. R. Berndt seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The July 22, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes were reviewed. R. Berndt would like his comment of “whether toner cartridges for copier are included with our service contract or is it an extra charge and if so what are the charges”. D. Bruchsaler motioned to approve the Minutes as amended. J. Basista seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

July 22, 2025 Executive Session Meeting Minutes approval was tabled until next month.

TREASURER’S REPORT: J. Basista motioned to approve the Treasurer’s Report for August 2025. R. Berndt seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved. PBS collected a gross amount of \$41,656.07 for July 2025 and their fee was \$ 2,074.33.

The investment firm has increased, through investing, our portfolio since inception with the following: Operating Account increase of: \$11,434.00 and the Capital Account increase of: \$4,960.00.

Discussed opening a 3rd account with Sawyer Falduto so we don’t co-mingle ambulance funds with fire funds. Per Attorney Lamb, ambulance monies can only be used for ambulance expenditures. For capital improvement, there is a cap on how much money can be in that account. Signed paperwork and L. Busse will get it back to Sawyer Falduto to process for a 3rd account.

Discussed possible service agreement with Sikich Accounting Firm. Their charge is \$4,800.00-\$6,500.00 to go over our accounting, levy, budget etc. practices. Their hourly fee is \$325.00. We need clarification on the statement of work, second page below #2 it states “Sikich is hereby authorized to

provide up to hours necessary....” It is missing the number of hours. D. Bruchsaler will get clarification. R. Berndt motioned to approve the Sikich contract. J. Basista seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

R. Berndt needed clarification on PBS statement of collections. The statement is what they collected and what they still owe us

CORRESPONDENCE – None

OLD BUSINESS – Ambulance Billing Ordinance tabled until next month.

The donated Crystal Lake Engine is listed for sale and is currently in Jonesboro, IL. Another company out of Alabama has reached out to see if they can have a bite on trying to sell it. We might want to move it to Brindlee Mountain. The Board directs D/C Yegge and B/C Rodewald along with Trustee Berndt to get the engine where it could be sold easily.

Budget Discussion. We still need to sign our Budget and Appropriations Ordinance. Tabled until next month.

R. Berndt asked if we could transfer money from ambulance to capital account. Per Attorney Lamb, we can move funds in and out of buckets under capital. When moving funds from capital to ambulance we might need a budget amendment. She strongly suggests consulting a financial advisor. Anytime we buy equipment, it should be capital expenditure.

Purchase order discussion tabled until next month.

DC Yegge sent an email to Chief Mandernack about MOU.

Discussed physical/fitness policy. Attorney Thomas sent the policy over. D/C Yegge would like to begin physicals after the 1st of the year. D/C Yegge will look into a contract with Occupational Health. L. Busse will call Occupational Health to change our contact to D/C Yegge. D. Bruchsaler motioned to adopt the fitness/physical policy. E. Gall seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

Discussed Bond/Fiduciary Insurance. We had a great meeting with the insurance carrier. Some of the topics discussed were increase in crime coverage, line of duty death coverage, increase engine replacement to 1.2 million etc. R. Berndt advised he just received a response from the insurance company yesterday on the cost and is not prepared to make recommendations. Tabled until next month. Discussed MOU vs Commandeering. Commandeering is covered under insurance. Attorney Lambs opinion is to have an MOU. Tabled until next month.

New phone system and bundling tv, phone and internet tabled until next month.

Long-term planning committee tabled until next month.

Discussed using a consulting firm to do a study on where we should go in the future with our buildings, equipment, staffing, responses to help us determine what we should put our money into remodeling or moving. The cost would be approximately \$24,500.00 paid out incrementally. T. Rishling supports the study but would like more quotes. Attorney Lamb advised to reach out to the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association, they may have a firm we could use. She also suggested Mission Critical Partners to see what they have to offer. Tabled until next month.

Before we decide to purchase Quickbooks Enterprise, we will wait until Sikich comes out to evaluate how we do things.

NEW BUSINESS – Discussed uniform company. J. Basista has been working with Istitch out of Hebron and feels they are better option than Today's Uniform. Hebron Fire uses Istitch for all their uniform needs as well. They also have a quick turnaround time. T. Rishling advised this is an operations issue and maybe get cost comparisons. Make sure whoever we go with can get badges and class A uniforms. It was suggested to get a list of items and quotes from both companies.

Discussed Capital purchases. D/C Yegge wanted to know the threshold a Chief can spend without prior Board approval. Trustees advised if it is over \$25,000.00 it needs to go out to bid. Attorney Lamb advised with other Districts, there is a threshold a Chief can spend without prior Board approval, and it is usually \$5,000.00-\$10,000.00. We could also do a straw vote if it was an emergency. If it is not an emergency, it would have to wait until the next meeting. D/C Yegge would like to purchase gas detectors, 1 3/4" hose, cameras, water rescue equipment, suits and flotation devices. R. Berndt motioned to move forward with capital purchases of water equipment, gas meters, cameras and hose per D/C Yegge's recommendations not to exceed \$26,000.00. D. Bruchsaler seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved. J. Basista motioned to approve Fire Chief to make capital purchases not to exceed \$10,000.00 without prior board approval, however the Trustees need to be notified via email. D. Bruchsaler seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

Discussed online bill pay. D. Bruchsaler will contact the bank to get the paperwork signed. .

TRUSTEES REPORT – Wonder Lake Fire Protection District is responsible for hosting the next McHenry County Trustees meeting and dinner for October 27, 2025. R. Berndt will handle and will be setting it up at Rusty Nail. T. Rishling has lined up a guest speaker. T. Rishling is asking that all Trustees attend.

Discussed prior awards dinners. We have a young department and there aren't years of service awards to hand out therefore we moved away from the dinners and began having picnics. Thank you to J. Basista for all her hard work planning our 75th Anniversary picnic. A great time was had by all.

Discussed moving the meeting to another location so not to interfere with the on-duty crew. D. Bruchsaler will investigate using the Highland Shores Community Building on 9/23/25. The address is 9015 Woody Trail.

Discussed life insurance. In order for a member/resigned member/retired member to get life insurance, they must be 40 years old and on the department for a minimum of 10 years.

Greg Mieling has retired from the department effective 8/26/25. The Trustees thanked Greg Mieling for his 21 years of service as a Safety Officer with the Wonder Lake Fire Protection District.

Chief Weber has retired from the department effective 8/22/25. The Board thanked Chief Weber for his 48 years of remarkable service to the department and community.

ATTORNEYS REPORT – Discussed state legislation requiring all FD to post their ambulance fees beginning in 2026. In 2027 there is language that would require a department to charge the same ambulance fees for the authority district on mutual aid calls. The feds are making a lot of cuts. There is no word if GEMT will be cut or not.

Discussed ambulance fee ordinance of an increase of 3%. Attorney Thomas will get that to us next month. We also need to adopt a PIO (Public Information Officer)

CHIEF'S REPORT – Discussed Chaplain policy and social media policy. We will work on training and call back policy.

D/C Yegge would like to move forward with interviews for Battalion Chiefs and Lieutenants. T. Rishling would like to see an outside Chief be present during interviews. Before the next meeting would like to get interviews done and members hired.

Discussed staffing study.

Discussed staffing Station #1 with more bunks. It was suggested to move the weight room to a bay on the apparatus floor and move administrative offices to the back barn. We would need to put heating and air in Harrison Hall if we did that.

R. Berndt and D. Bruchsaler don't think we need the squad. D/C Yegge will get prices on it.

ISO would like to have a review before the end of the year.

Discussed background checks. The State of Illinois has a 2 week turnaround time. Good Hire is another option. D/C Yegge will see if County can do fingerprints for us.

Discussed Funding Navigator for grants. We have not signed the contract yet. They are looking for information on the new ambulance we are purchasing.

L. Busse to make a sign-in sheet for Public Comments in our meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – R. McCafferty would like to thank the Board for inviting him to 75th Anniversary. It went well and a good time was had by all. The Board did a great job on the festivities. Thanks especially to J. Basista for all her planning.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – D. Bruchsaler motioned to go into Executive Session at 11:39 a.m. to discuss specific individuals pursuant to two (c) (1) of the Opens Meeting Act. E. Gall seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

Reconvened at 11:55 a.m.

ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION – D. Bruchsaler motioned for Matt Yegge to be the next fire chief effective immediately, E. Gall seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved. D/C Yegge accepted the position of Fire Chief for the Wonder Lake Fire Protection District. Chief Yegge would like to get 2 Deputy Chief positions posted ASAP.

J. Basista would like to look internally for D/C promotions before we venture outside. Attorney Lamb advised it is best to do all interviews at once. Trustees did agree that an applicant should get bonus points for being a current member.

T. Rishing will generate a press release on the appointment of Matt Yegge as the new Fire Chief.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND PAYROLL – The invoices and payroll were presented for payment. D. Bruchsaler motioned to approve the invoices and payroll for August 2025 totaling \$160,000.00. J. Basista seconded the motion. Roll call vote: All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

E. Gall motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 p.m.; J. Basista seconded the motion. All Trustees present voted Aye. Motion approved.

Approved: _____ Trustee/Secretary: Erv Gall